

Wind moderate, easterly; bright sun later. Bird was flying east and appeared to be tired as it dropped exhausted on the ship.

This Shearwater appears to be an extremely rare vagrant to the Indian Ocean, its normal range being in the northern Pacific.

'STORTH,'

MANOR WAY,
ALDWICK BAY,
BOGNOR REGIS, U. K.,
January 25, 1967.

W. W. A. PHILLIPS

5. ON THE OCCURRENCE OF THE GREAT WHITEBELLIED HERON *ARDEA INSIGNIS* HUME IN BIHAR

On 1 March 1964 at 5 p.m. I saw five Great Whitebellied Herons *Ardea insignis* Hume near Jamalpur, Darbhanga District, feeding in a water-logged, harvested rice field. They did not heed my close approach to about 30 ft. After taking notes I tried to get still nearer when two of them rose silently only to settle a little farther ahead. They were rather confiding. Another bird was seen on 5 March, soaring at a height of about 200 ft. over a channel of the Kosi River at Nirmali, Saharsa District. On 10 March two more birds were observed sitting on a leafless tree near Beluva, 6 miles north-east of Birpur, close to the India-Nepal border. The identification is based on the field notes, which were later checked with the specimens in the Society's Research collections. This grand heron can easily be identified in the field by its great size (bigger than the Painted Stork), long ashy-grey nuchal crest, and the grey upper parts contrasting with the white under parts. In flight the white axillaries are confirmatory.

Ripley (1961) gives the range of *Ardea insignis* (= *Ardea imperialis*) thus: 'From the Nepal and Sikkim terai east along the Himalayan foothills through north-east Assam, south to East Pakistan and Arakan and east to northern Burma'. Biswas (1960) did not come across this bird in Nepal.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
HORNBILL HOUSE,
BOMBAY, 1-BR.,
June 10, 1965.

P. V. GEORGE¹

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6. ON THE OCCURRENCE OF THE BLACKNECKED STORK [*XENORHYNCHUS ASIATICUS* (LATHAM)] IN THE BOMBAY KONKAN

On 26 February 1967, S. Chaudhuri and I stopped at the Wada Tank, Bhiwandi Taluka, Thana District, Maharashtra, to look at birds. A huge bird in a silted and reedy patch on the far side puzzled us in the distance. Upon closer approach it proved to be a Blacknecked Stork [*Xenorhynchus asiaticus* (Latham)] which, though generally said to be found all over India, does not appear to have been recorded in the Konkan, nor for that matter anywhere in the adjacent Deccan.

The nearest records are Dabka (Baroda) and Gwalior in the north and Borgampad on the Godavari, far to the east in Andhra Pradesh. In E. H. Aitkens's copy of Barnes's BIRDS OF BOMBAY however, there is a handwritten note referring to one seen at Dasgam on the Bankot River in Ratnagiri District, south of Bombay, on 4 April 1897—just 70 years ago!

75, ABDUL REHMAN STREET,
BOMBAY 3,
March 23, 1967.

HUMAYUN ABDULALI

7. OCCURRENCE OF THE WRYNECK *JYNX TORQUILLA* LINNAEUS IN KERALA STATE, SOUTH INDIA

On 10 March 1967 in a fuel clearing of Red Gums on Granby Estate, Vandiperiyar P.O., Kerala State, my attention was attracted by a bird which suddenly flew out of long grass at ground level at the side of a foot-path on which I was walking.

My first impression was that it was an immature Brown Shrike, but after it had alighted in a Red Gum tree (*Eucalyptus robusta*) I was able to look at it through binoculars. Its conical pointed beak, a dark band reaching from the crown to the upper back, and another